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THE NEGROES OF COLUMBIA  
MISSOURI

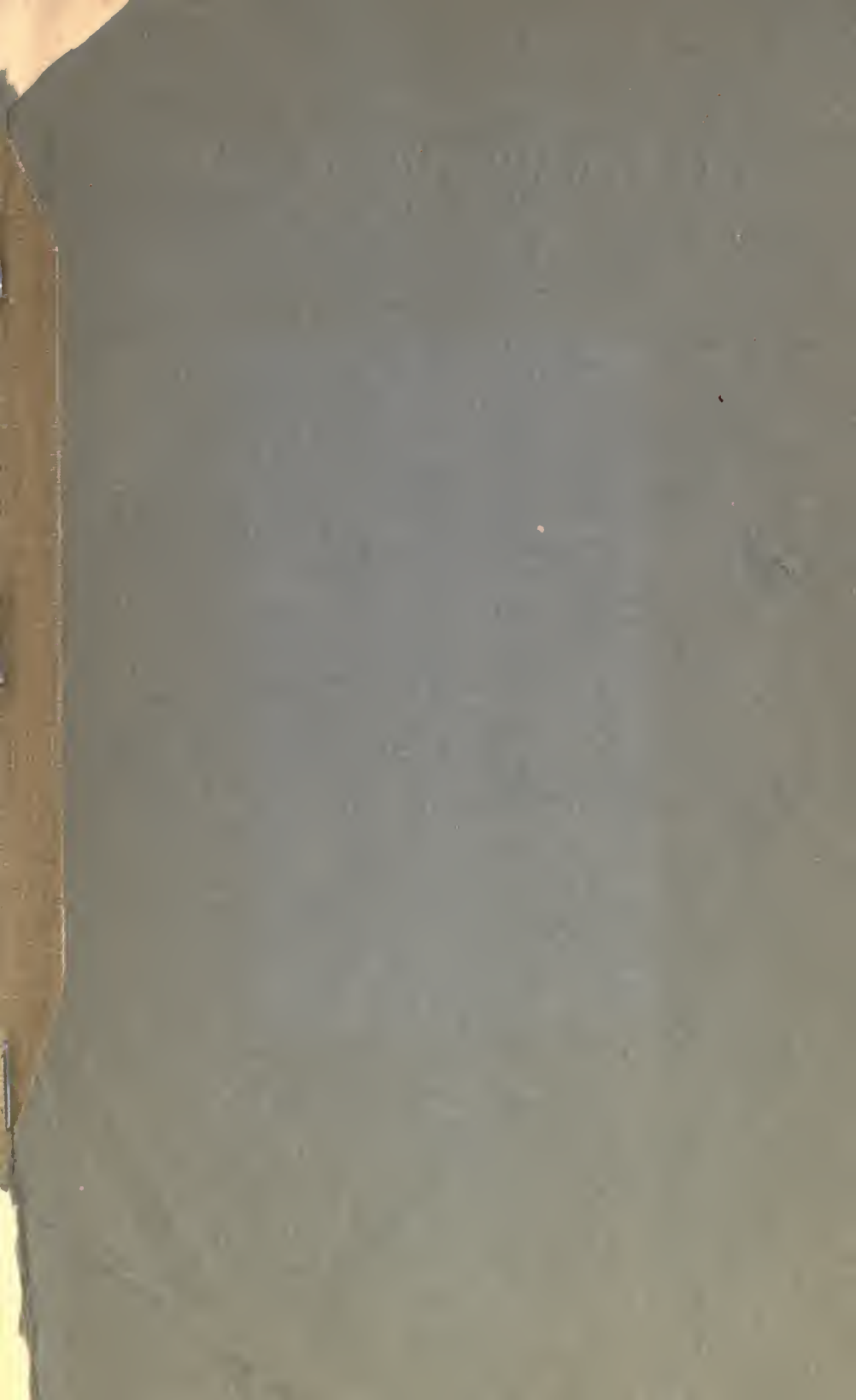
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# THE NEGROES OF COLUMBIA MISSOURI

## A CONCRETE STUDY OF THE RACE PROBLEM

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE DEPART-  
MENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, IN PARTIAL FULFILL-  
MENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF MASTER OF ARTS

(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY)

By  
WILLIAM WILSON ELWANG, M. A.

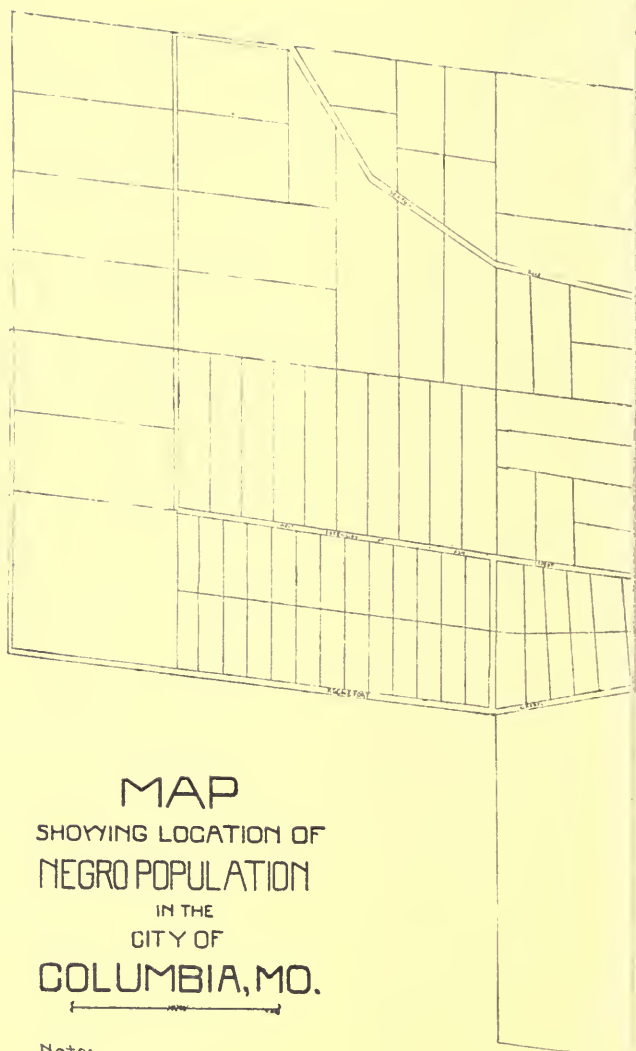
WITH A PREFACE  
BY  
CHARLES A. ELLWOOD, Ph. D.  
PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY.

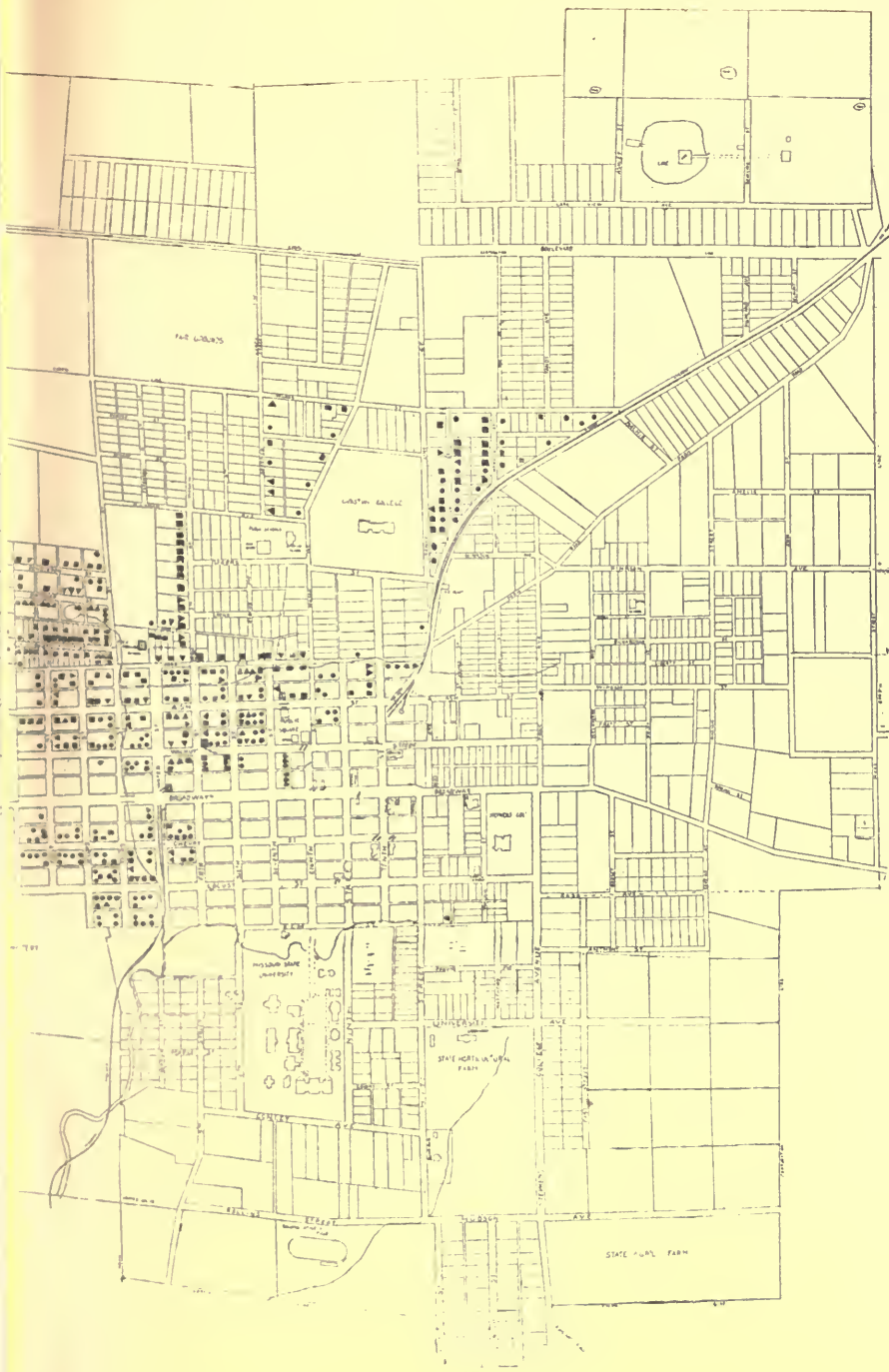
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UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI  
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PREFACE

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The following monograph on the condition of the negroes of Columbia, Missouri, does not profess to be based upon complete statistical data. As these were impossible to obtain, it is rather a collection of impressions received from personal observations, which while falling short of scientific accuracy, may nevertheless be considered trustworthy. Indeed, the general trustworthiness of the picture presented by the monograph would not be questioned by any intelligent resident of the community in which the study was made. The few statistics which have been obtained from official sources and through personal investigation confirm the impressions received from general observation.

The problem discussed is of such importance that even the results of a limited study of the condition of the negro population in a given locality are, I am sure, worthy of publication. The conditions which prevail in Columbia, moreover, although a community in a border State, are typical in many respects of the conditions which obtain among the negroes in Southern towns generally. The University undertakes the publication of this Master's dissertation, then, in the belief that it may be of some possible value to students of the race problem. It is published also for the sake of illustrating the work of the Department of Sociology in the University's exhibit in connection with the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

The author of the monograph is a gentleman of Southern antecedents and education; but the opinions expressed on various points seem to me remarkably free from personal or sectional bias. Particularly do I find

myself in hearty accord with the main conclusions reached in the final chapter.

I must confess that, after three years residence in a community where thirty per cent of the population are negroes, I have been compelled to revise to some extent my opinions upon the race question. How totally out of adjustment the average negro is to the society in which he lives, has been impressed upon me as never before. No Northern person can fully comprehend this without having experienced the fact. Yet it should be fully realized by all who are concerned either with the discussion of the problem or with the practical work of uplifting the race.

Primarily this lack of adjustment is on the economic side. The average negro as a wage-worker secures neither the respect of his employer nor a competence for himself. He is not adapted to the free wage system. Herein lies the crux of the difficulty. As a consequence, those relations of mutual respect and affection which so often subsisted between the colored man and his employer, under the regime of slavery, now scarcely exist. As a further consequence, the relations between the races, in almost every community in the South, are strained to the point of disruption. This is as true of the relations between the better classes of whites and the negroes as it is of the relations between the negroes and those whites who make no profession of being actuated by Christian principles in their dealings with the lower race. Harmonious relations between the races cannot exist until the negro becomes satisfactory as an instrument of production under a system of free contract; that is, until the negro wage-earner secures the respect of his white employer by his efficiency, fidelity, and honesty in his work.

The negro problem is, then, primarily a problem in economic adjustment. If this is true, the solution of

the problem—putting aside all deportation and colonization schemes as at once fatuous and impossible—consists first of all in giving the negro such training as will fit him for a place in our industrial life. This means industrial training in the broad sense of the phrase, for the masses of the colored population, such as will develop in them the character and intelligence necessary for efficiency in production on the one hand, and for citizenship, on the other. It may fairly be claimed that Mr. Booker Washington and others have demonstrated the feasibility and practicability of such industrial training for the negro on a large scale. But only the Federal Government can undertake to carry it out. The intervention of the Federal Government is demanded, then, if anything effective is to be done toward the solution of the negro problem. The negroes, like the Indians, are still essentially a nature people. There is no reason why the Federal Government should not, at least during their minority, regard them, like the Indians, as wards of the Government, and provide for their education accordingly. Only it is to be hoped that the Federal Government would not repeat with the negro the blunders which it has made in its attempts to educate and civilize the Indian.

This, I understand, is the position of the author of this monograph. If its publication serves at all to diffuse this idea, I shall be glad. For the people of the United States can not too soon make up their minds that anything like an approximate solution of this problem calls for Federal intervention. It is surely time to act when one hears, as I have heard, Northern men of abolitionist ancestry, who have come to reside in the South, say in private that they think that the abolition of slavery was a mistake.

CHARLES A. ELLWOOD.

The University of Missouri,  
Columbia, Mo.



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# THE NEGROES OF COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

## *A Concrete Study of the Race Problem*

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### INTRODUCTORY

The presence of more than 9,000,000 negroes in the United States, most of them massed below Mason and Dixon's line, has created problems economic, political and social of tremendous importance to the present and future of this nation. Opportunities for the solution of some of these problems have been golden, but blunders of would-be-reformers and political chicanery quite effectually demoralized both races, and the opportunities were not improved. Happily, it is not yet too late to remedy the errors of the past. By the application of a discreet and worthy program, based upon a real knowledge of the real facts, and with a saner conception of mutual duty, it is, perhaps, still possible to build up conditions that will enable the races reciprocally to discharge obligations that cannot much longer be ignored without the inexorable degeneration of the entire national social organism. The instinct of national self-preservation sternly demands that an honest, intelligent and persistent effort be made to bring the two seemingly antithetical peoples into helpful accord and sympathy, into harmonious economical and political, yes, even social adjustment.

But for the achievement of this desirable end there must be, first, a thorough survey, and secondly, an intelligent comprehension of the problem. Until quite

recently trustworthy facts, beyond the superficial or extraordinary dealt with by the literary historian, were exceedingly scarce, or, to be more accurate, had not been systematized for the sociological student. But now encouraging beginnings have been made in this direction. There are at command such extensive studies of the problem as Prof. W. E. B. Du Bois' "The Philadelphia Negro"\* a careful and thorough piece of work. It is no disparagement of this valuable "study" to say that it is more than doubtful whether the negro as he "lives and moves and has his being" in Philadelphia can safely be looked upon as typical of his Southern brother except in his more general race characteristics. Prof. Du Bois' own figures amply demonstrate that the negro has never formed a very large proportion of the population of that city, averaging since 1790 only about six per cent. of the total. While the negro's position everywhere in this country is entirely anomalous and artificial, it seems to be much more so in what were the ante-bellum free states than in the old slave-holding communities. The South has been and is to-day the American negro's home. The first African slaves ever brought to the North American continent were landed in the South, either in Florida or Virginia. It was in the South that slavery became most firmly rooted, bred its inevitable moral debasement of the human chattels themselves, and wrought its innumerable evils upon the ruling class. It was in the South that the vast bulk of the slaves were set adrift as freedmen, entirely incapable of self-direction, and producing an abrupt disarrangement of all previously existing economic, political and social order. And it is in the South only that the relations of the two races have bred the problems that confront the nation to-day. It is in that section, therefore, that the negro, his character, environment

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\*University of Pennsylvania Press, 1899.

and capacity, ought to be most carefully observed if the key to his future is ever to be found. It was this conviction that prompted this study of a typical situation. It is earnestly hoped that it may throw another small ray of light into a very dark problem and lead to wider observations and, therefore, broader generalizations by other and more competent laborers in the same field.

This little brochure is, therefore, an attempt to study, systematically, the vital, economical, social, and ethical conditions of the nearly two thousand negroes living in the city of Columbia, Missouri, in the years 1901 and 1902. While some effort has been made to secure reliable historical data, the chief concern has been to ascertain actually existing conditions, on the theory that the value of a fact for scientific purposes decreases in proportion to its distance in time and space from the observer.

The investigations began with a house to house canvass by a class of students in Sociology in the University of Missouri under the direction of Dr. C. A. Ellwood, the head of that department. The data were mostly quite easily obtained, but in some important lines of the investigations, such as births and deaths, immorality and crime, it was exceedingly difficult to reach the needful facts. The negro, like the Chinaman in America, has both an esoteric and an exoteric standard of living. The conclusions so frequently drawn from observations of his conduct when in contact with the whites in public are altogether superficial and misleading. A very conscientious effort has therefore been made to get somewhat beneath the outward and seeming, to scratch, as it were the thin veneer of appearances and secure for what it may be worth toward a solution of the problem, a true insight into the Columbia negro's domestic and social life, as well

as the economic conditions in an environment in which he has existed for three full generations in all the phases of his people's history in this country.

The utmost care has been exercised to make the investigations as reliable as possible. Recourse was always had to the best available means of information and then "to naught extenuate nor set down aught in malice."

But, of course, though he strive ever so earnestly to be scientifically neutral, there is always the liability that the investigator will be swayed by the bias of early training or by convictions previously formed. The residuum of error in work like this, in which the personal factors of both the investigator and the investigated enter so largely, must necessarily be considerable. But it is confidently believed that in spite of the bias due to the personal equation, and the defects inherent in the statistical method, the results are sufficiently accurate for bases of future work in race sociology. The reader must remember that this is not so much an attempt to answer the race problem as an effort to put certain facts into a form in which they will by and by assist to an answer.

As already intimated, the peculiar value of the present inquiry lies in the fact that the negro problem in Columbia, Missouri, in nowise differs essentially from that problem elsewhere, in the South, or wherever negroes are found in sufficient numbers to be felt as factors in any department of the people's activities. The negro has lived in Columbia for more than three generations, first as a slave and then as a freedman, and always in sufficiently large numbers to make plain and pressing the same issues which his presence raises elsewhere. In Columbia to-day (1900) there are no less than 1,916 persons of negro descent, living side by side with 3,735 persons of Caucasian extraction, closely

dependent upon and yet more or less segregated from them in the life process. These nearly 2,000 negroes, a community within a community, present the usual quota of ignorance, poverty, and crime of the submerged classes of all communities. Politically there is here the same partisan affiliation as elsewhere in the South. Socially there are exactly the same caste distinctions. Racially there is the same antipathy with tolerance. It is, in a word, the same old and seemingly so hopelessly complex problem of the childish race in competition with the manly. Left to themselves no peoples of the black race have ever risen much above the primordial stage. None has ever created an institution or given birth to a social organization above the plane of barbarism. No division of it has ever had a written language, or developed an architecture.\* It remains to be seen whether, under the tuition of the masterful Caucasians, and in racial amalgamation with them, the hybrid descendants of the two will show any greater aptitude to rise to something permanent and worthy.

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\*See Keane's *Ethnology*, p. 268.



# THE NEGROES OF COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

## *A Concrete Study of the Race Problem*

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### CHAPTER I

#### HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL

When that vast area known as the Louisiana Purchase was transferred to the Government of the United States, in 1803, the French and Spanish social institutions were left almost entirely undisturbed. Prominent among those institutions was slavery, which had been introduced into the territory nearly a century before the last change of jurisdiction. In 1719 a Sieur Renault, one of the directors of the famous Mississippi Company, in need of laborers for the mining operations in and about Ste. Genevieve, imported via St. Domingo, 500 Guinea negroes,\* the poorest type of full-blood Africans, to supply the want. In 1722, by further importations, the number had grown to 2,100. In the decade between 1750 and 1760 there were two slaves to every white person in the colony. But such was the influx of adventurers and settlers into the virgin region that in 1799 there was only one slave to every five white persons. Comparing the rates of increase of the two elements of the population of what was first the Territory and afterwards became the State of Missouri, from 1799, when a census was taken by the authorities, we secure, including free negroes (always an insignificant element in this region), the following figures:

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\*Switzler, *History of Missouri*, p. 143.



## COMPARATIVE RATES OF INCREASE OF THE RACES IN MISSOURI.

Year.	Whites.	Increase per cent.	Negroes.	Increase per cent.
1799	4,948	.....	1,080	.....
1810	17,227	248.16	3,618	235.00
1820	56,274	226.66	10,369	186.06
1830	114,795	103.99	25,660	147.47
1840	323,898	182.55	59,814	133.10
1850	592,004	82.08	90,040	50.53
1860	1,063,489	79.47	118,503	31.61
1870	1,603,146	50.88	118,071	— .36
1880	2,022,826	26.18	145,350	23.10
1890	2,528,458	24.99	150,726	3.69
1900	2,944,443	12.51	161,822	7.36

In Boone county, of which Columbia is the county seat, we have, since 1830, when the county was created, these comparative rates of increase of the whites and negroes:

## COMPARATIVE RATES OF INCREASE OF THE RACES IN BOONE COUNTY.

Year.	Whites.	Increase per cent.	Negroes.	Increase per cent.
1830	8,859	.....	1,924	.....
1840	13,561	53.07	3,030	57.48
1850	14,979	11.19	3,679	21.41
1860	19,486	30.09	4,574	24.33
1870	20,765	1.43	4,038	-11.07
1880	25,422	22.42	5,082	25.85
1890	26,043	2.44	4,677	-7.97
1900	28,642	9.98	4,564	-2.41



For the town of Columbia itself the figures, since 1860, are as follows:

COMPARATIVE RATES OF INCREASE OF THE RACES IN COLUMBIA, AND PERCENTAGE OF NEGROES TO TOTAL POPULATION.

Year.	Whites.	Increase per cent.	Negroes.	Increase per cent.	Per cent total pop
1860.	873	.....	541	.....	38.26
1870	1,438	64.69	798	47.50	35.68
1880	2,031	40.54	1,295	62.28	38.93
1890	2,406	19.05	1,593	23.01	39.83
1900	3,735	55.23	1,916	23.10	33.90

Comparing the percentages of increase in the county with those in Columbia, we obtain this exhibit:

COMPARISON OF THE RATES OF INCREASE OF THE RACES IN BOONE COUNTY AND COLUMBIA.

Year.	Whites.				Negroes.			
	County.	Increase per cent.	Town.	Increase per cent.	County.	Increase per cent.	Town.	Inc per ct.
1860	19,486	.....	843	.....	4,574	.....	541	.....
1870	20,765	1.43	1,438	64.69	4,038	-11.07	798	47.50
1880	25,422	22.42	2,031	40.54	5,082	25.85	1,295	62.28
1890	26,043	2.44	2,406	19.85	4,677	-7.97	1,593	23.01
1900	28,642	9.98	3,735	55.23	4,564	-2.41	1,961	23.10

After making due allowance for the atrociously defective census of 1870, an inspection of these tables reveals several interesting things: (1) That from their earliest importation to Missouri soil the negroes have steadily increased in numbers, clearly demonstrating that they are as much at home here, climatically and economically, as in more Southern latitudes; (2) That the percentages of increase of whites and negroes have

been quite uniformly maintained in the State, in Boone county, and in Columbia, from the earliest census period until 1890, in which year a decided decrease of the percentage of increase shows itself among the negroes of the State, with only a slight recovery in 1900, while in Boone county there is a positive decrease; (3) That here, as elsewhere, the negroes show a strong and deplorable tendency to congest at the centers of population. While the negro population of Boone county was actually decreasing, from 1880 to 1900, that of Columbia was steadily increasing. At present the percentage of negroes to population in the county is only 15.93, and nearly one-half of them are gathered in Columbia. It is, of course, precisely this feature which accentuates the difficulties of the problem.

The actual population of Boone county, by color and sex, and the contact of the races, is comprehensively shown in this table:

POPULATION OF BOONE COUNTY, 1900, BY COLOR AND SEX.

Race.	Pop. by Color	Pop. by Sex	Percent.
Whites....	24,078	.....	84.07
Male ....	.....	14,599	60.63
Female..	.....	9,479	39.37
Negroes...	4,564	....	15.93
Male ....	.....	2,253	49.36
Female..	.....	2,311	50.63

In Columbia the situation is as follows:

POPULATION OF COLUMBIA, 1900, BY COLOR AND SEX.

Race	Pop by Color	Pop by Sex	Per cent
Whites ...	3,734	.....	66.07
Male ....	.....	1,803	48.28
Female..	.....	1,931	51.71
Negroes...	1,916	.,.,.	33.90
Male ....	.....	852	44.46
Female..	.....	1,064	55.53

The conspicuous features of the last two tables are:

(1) The preponderating number of white males in the county, with, on the other hand, a preponderating number of white females in the town; (2) The preponderating number of negro females in both town and county, a condition not without its influence both economically and morally.

Comparing the races in Columbia by color and school age we obtain these results:

THE RACES IN COLUMBIA, 1900, BY COLOR AND SCHOOL AGE (5-20 YRS.)

Whites	Negroes
Males.. . . . .553	Males . . . . .329
Females.. . . . .605	Females . . . . .386

Some light is, perhaps, shed upon the characteristics of the negroes when we attempt to determine their residential stability as a portion of Columbia's population. An effort was therefore made to ascertain, for heads of families only, how long they had lived continuously in the city. The results show that the 236 persons from whom reliable information could be had can be divided

into four classes: (1) Those born in Columbia before the war of secession and residing there ever since; (2) those born elsewhere, but who came to Columbia before the war and have lived there ever since; (3) those born in Columbia since the war and still living there; (4) those who immigrated to Columbia since the war and have remained there. This last class can, in turn, be subdivided into four classes; (a) those who have lived in Columbia from 35 to 20 years; (b) those who have lived there from 20 to 10 years; (c) those who have lived there from 10 years to 1 year; (d) those who have lived there less than 1 year.

Analyzing the first four main divisions we obtain the following:

Thirty-three were born in Columbia before the Civil War and still reside there.

Eleven were born elsewhere but were brought to Columbia before the war and still live there.

Thirty-nine were born in Columbia since the war and still live there.

One hundred and fifty-three immigrated to Columbia since the war and still live there.

Subjecting the last class to more minute analysis we find that:

Fifty-eight have lived in Columbia from 20 to 35 years, and that of this number—

Twenty-one had a previous residence in Boone county.

Twelve had a previous residence elsewhere in Missouri.

Thirteen had a previous residence outside of the State.

Twelve had a previous unknown residence.

Twenty-two have lived in Columbia from 10 to 20 years, and that of this number—

Thirteen had a previous residence in Boone county.

Six had a previous residence elsewhere in Missouri.

One had a previous residence outside of the State.

Two had a previous unknown residence.

Sixty-two have lived in Columbia from 1 to 10 years and that of this number—

Twenty-two had a previous residence in Boone county.

Thirty-four had a previous residence elsewhere in Missouri.

One had a previous residence outside of the State.

Five had a previous unknown residence.

Eleven have lived in Columbia one year and less, and that of this number—

Four had a previous residence in Boone county.

Four had a previous residence elsewhere in Missouri.

Two had a previous residence outside of the State.

One had a previous unknown residence.

## CHAPTER II

### ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Our next inquiry will be concerned with the Columbia negro as a wealth-producer and his consequent material progress since the Civil War.

Before emancipation the negro free-holder of Columbia was a safely negligible quantity in the town's economic situation. Only an infinitesimally small portion of the thirty or forty millions of dollars of property then held by freedmen in the slave states was in his hands. And if the usual estimate of \$700,000,000 as the accumulations of the race in the South to-day be correct, then the proportion has been steadily maintained. The negroes of Columbia hold about one-tenthousandth part of the race's wealth in the South, but constitute about one five-thousandth of the race numerically.

The city of Columbia does not make any race distinctions on her tax lists. It was, therefore, somewhat difficult to secure the data shown below. But with the assistance of a gentleman who had been for a number of years the local tax assessor, a complete list of property values assessed (on about a one-third basis) against the negro population, was obtained. The results are interesting and instructive. They destroy the prevailing local impression that Columbia negroes as a class are unusually thrifty and property-accumulating.

The following table gives a comprehensive view of the total assessed property values of Columbia for both races:

## ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUES OF COLUMBIA, 1900.

Kind of property.	Whites.	Negroes.	Total.
Real.....	\$1,164,360	\$54,630	\$1,218,990
Personal. ....	663,815	23,425	687,240
Total... ..	\$1,828,175	78,055	\$1,906,230

The entire number of persons, irrespective of color, paying taxes upon property both personal and real is 1,585, or 28.05 per cent of the total population of 5,651.

The entire number of white taxpayers upon both classes of property is 1,155, or 30.09 per cent of the total white population of 3,735.

The entire number of negro taxpayers upon both classes of property is 434, or 22.05 per cent of the total negro population of 1,916.

Of the 434 negro taxpayers 185 pay taxes upon real estate only. Of these 104 are men, 74 are women, and in 7 cases husband and wife are jointly assessed; 112 pay taxes upon both real and personal property; 242 pay taxes upon personal property only.

The total of assessed real and personal property, \$78,055, is distributed among the 434 holders as follows:

Owning between \$7,500 and \$5,000 .....	1
Owning between \$3,000 and \$2,000 .....	4
Owning between \$2,000 and \$1,000 .....	3
Owning between \$1,000 and \$500 .....	23
Owning between \$500 and \$100 .....	147
Owning between \$100 and less .....	256

These figures show—

(1) That the entire negro population of Columbia (33.90 percent of the total) possesses only 4.09 per cent of the city's entire taxable property other than that invested in banking, of which no account has been taken, and of which they hold none whatever.



(2) That they hold 4.48 per cent of the real, and only 3.42 per cent of the personal property.

(3) That, assuming the average negro taxpayer to have begun his career in 1865 without a cent, it appears that he has managed to provide for himself since that time and to accumulate, in addition, property to the value of \$181.52. Or if we average the total of \$78,055 among the whole negro population, we find that, since the war, they have not only managed to make a living but have accumulated in addition, property which, if equally distributed, would give them approximately \$40.75 per capitem.

W. H. Thomas, himself a negro, in his book on "The American Negro," places the individual average of accumulation throughout the South at the present day at \$90.00 per capitem.\* But this is evidently an estimate of the total rather than the assessed property valuation. The Columbia negro would, therefore, seem to be somewhat better off, financially, than his fellows elsewhere.

(4) That nearly one-half of all the negro property is in the possession of 31 persons. That of this half, or \$37,265, nearly three-fifths, or \$22,315 is in the hands of eight persons. In other words, over one fourth of all the negro property of Columbia is in the hands of these eight persons. Still further, of this \$22,315 owned by 8 persons, one-third or \$7,500, is owned by one man and \$3,000 more by his wife.

(5) That only 31 of the 434 negro taxpayers have shown a measurable ability not only to make, but (and this is of more importance) to hold on to money. Four hundred and three must be put down as lacking in the thrift that always characterizes a progressive people.

(6) That land ownership, always a powerful factor in the up-lift of any class or people, is still notably

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\*Thomas, *The American Negro*, p. 76.



lacking among Columbia negroes taken as a class. Out of a total of 1,176 homes in Columbia only 132 are owned by negroes.

(7) That of a total tax-revenue of \$18,000.00 received by the city only \$700.00 is paid by negroes. Thirty-three and ninety one-hundredths per cent of the population pays 3.14 per cent of the taxes.

By summing up much of the foregoing into tabulated form we get this exhibit of

PROPERTY DISTRIBUTION AMONG COLUMBIA NEGROES.

Average for each tax-payer.....	\$181.52	.....	.....	
Average for each individual.....	40.75	.....	.....	
Held by thirty-one individuals...	.....	\$37,265	47.75*	
Held by eight individuals.....	.....	22,315	28.06*	
Total holdings .....	.....	.....	.....	\$73,055

\*Per cent of total holdings.

It has not been found possible to take account in these returns of the mortgage and other indebtedness upon either real or personal property. From the acknowledgements of the owners a total of only \$8,250 of mortgage indebtedness upon 33 pieces of real property was obtained, an average of \$250 on each piece. The real figures are very much larger. There are, in addition, many claims and liens held by "time-payment" concerns that prey greedily upon the negro's monumental cupidity and vanity. These claims are held against stock, pianos, organs, sewing machines, pictures and furniture. It is probable that one-fourth of the personal property is more or less encumbered in this way. In its effects upon the negro as a potential property accumulator, this system is exceedingly deplorable. Easily persuaded to invest by a plausible canvasser eager for his percentage, he remains the proud posses-

sor of a squeaky melodeon or rattle-trap sewing machine for a few weeks or months, only to have it then taken from him because of his inability or disinclination to continue the burden of the weekly payments.

To sum up, the returns seem to show that while as taxpayers simply the negroes are proportionately nearly as much in evidence as their white fellow-citizens, the free-holders among them are comparatively few. The showing is quite discouraging. There do not seem to be any very cogent reasons why the Columbia negroes have not accumulated more property. That a few have been able to make and save a great deal goes to show that the field has at least been open to their industry and enterprise.

The causes for failure are doubtless many. The very low rate of wages obtained for such labor as the negro can do, together with the steadily rising price of real estate, even in the localities by rigid caste distinction set aside for him, have something to do with the failure. But laziness, misdirected energy, lack of foresight, pleasure-seeking, immorality, have all been much more potent factors in keeping him in poverty. These traits lie at the root of his economic failure.

Nor can it be said that there are any very hopeful local signs of betterment. The present wage and industrial situation in Columbia is as good, nay, it is much better than it has been in years. Wages have steadily risen all along the line of the negro's endeavor. Skilled workmen, reliable laborers and good servants are in great demand. That he appreciates this fact and proposes to make the best of it is not apparent. The average negro in Columbia to-day is as shiftless and indifferent to the future as ever his predecessor was in slavery. As a laborer his chief characteristics are unreliability and inability. If he has a dollar in his pocket he can not see the necessity for toil. He takes more

pleasure in the regalia of a secret society than in the comfort of his home. He will cheerfully give a tenth or a fifth of his weekly wage to a petty, and perhaps, fraudulent, society to insure the burial of his unworthy body with unbecoming pomp. But to lay aside as much per week against the coming of the inevitable "rainy day" is a feature of domestic economy utterly beyond his ability. Only three or four of all the Columbia negroes are members of the local building and loan association, and they are borrowers.

There are, certainly, some conspicuous exceptions to these generalizations. Among Columbia's negro population are to be found men and women who by attention to duty, reliability, intelligent thrift, and, a rare virtue among post-bellum blacks, a genuine interest in the affairs of their employers, have accumulated property and have won the respect of their white neighbors. It would have been a grateful task to the writer to enlarge upon the affairs of this small minority, but space and time both forbade. Recognition of their worth ought not to be withheld, even though, as is the case, the white blood in their veins is largely accountable for their success.

An interesting side-light is shed upon the negro's economic situation by the report of the Columbia Charity Organization Society for 1901-'02. Of the cases dealt with by this society, enumerated as families, 35 were whites and 33 negroes; enumerated as individuals 156 were whites and 138 negroes. Even with due allowance made for 21 cases caused by a smallpox epidemic among the negroes in the winter of the period in question, the proportion of helpless or readily dependent poverty represented by these figures is very high.

## CHAPTER III

### OCCUPATIONS AND WAGES

How do all these negroes earn a living? is a question frequently asked in Columbia when, especially on Saturdays, hundreds of them are seen strolling aimlessly about or lounging at the street corners or in front of the dramshops. What follows is probably the first systematic attempt ever made to answer that question. Nor is it by any means an easy one to answer. The problem it raises is complicated and the difficulties in the way of its solution great. Here is a large group of persons, most of them crassly ignorant, inefficient, and often dishonest, in competition with a much larger group of well-trained, steady and masterful persons of a different race, upon whom it devolves in some wise, to solve the pressing problem of economic survival, the everlasting question of "bread." How do they do it? What do these 1,916 people do for a living? A detailed answer is found in the following schedule:

Of 859 persons, 10 years old and over, (417 males and 442 females, or about four-fifths of all the race's wage-earners in Columbia) about whom reliable information could be obtained—

Twenty-five were in the "learned" professions.

Sixty were in "skilled" trades.

Twenty-four were independent proprietors or in more or less responsible positions.

One hundred and sixty-three were a superior class of laborers.

One hundred and thirty-three were cooks.

Two hundred and thirteen were laundresses.

Two hundred and forty-one were common laborers.

The gainful occupations of the males were divided into the following classes :

Barbers 16.	Musicians 1.
Butchers 2.	Physicians 1.
Bartenders 3.	Plasterers 3.
Bricklayers 8.	Pool-room proprietors 1.
Blacksmiths 4.	Painters and paperers 3.
Clerks 5.	Porters 4.
Coachmen 4.	Pedlers 1.
Carpenters 3.	Quarrymen 2.
Cooks 1.	Restaurateurs 1.
Contractors 3.	Railroad employees 3.
Clergymen 4.	Stewards 6.
Engineers 2.	Soldiers 1.
Farmhands 15.	Scullions 1.
Houseservants 13.	Scavengers 7.
Hodecarriers 2.	Shoeblocks 2.
Janitors 8.	Teachers 3.
Laborers 209.	Teamsters 54.
Millers 2.	Tailors 1.
Messengers 5.	Tinners 1.
Merchants 2.	Waiters 4.
Miners 5.	Wheelwrights 1.
Total, 417.	

Among females the gainful operations divide as follows :

Boarding-house keepers 1.	Nurses 2.
Cooks 93.	Pedlers 1.
Housekeepers 36.	Seamstresses 14.
Housegirls 45.	Scullions 1.
Hairdressers 3.	“Students” 10.
Laborers 11.	Teachers 7.
Laundresses 213.	Waitresses 5.
Total, 442.	

Observations on this exhibit seem to be needless. Every reader will note at once the poor showing made by skilled labor. The trained mechanic still remains in a pitiful minority amid a mob of common laborers, teamsters and others only a degree or two higher in the scale. The women are mostly cooks and laundresses, and very indifferent ones at that. The exhibit is exceedingly discouraging, and all the more so when we call to mind the fact that Lincoln Institute, the State's normal and industrial school for negroes, is located only thirty miles from Columbia, at Jefferson City, and has been there for thirty-five years!

*The Wage Question.* What, now, is the earning capacity of the 859 persons engaged in these more or less gainful occupations? The reply will be found in the following tables, in which the wage-earners are divided into three classes as they earn, *always according to their own statements*, either from \$1.00 to \$5.00 per week, or from \$5.00 to \$10.00, or from \$10.00 upwards. To the first class belong 151 males and 230 females; to the second, 159 males and 53 females; to the third, 54 males and no females. The decrease in the number of females in the second class and their total absence from the third is worthy of remark. There were 53 males and 149 females whose incomes could not be ascertained, but whose earning capacity is averaged, in a fourth column, at \$4.00 per week, certainly a high figure:



TABLE OF WEEKLY WAGES OF MALES.

Occupations.	\$1 to \$5 per wk	\$5 to \$10 per wk	\$10 up per wk	Ave'ge of \$4 per wk
Barbers.....	4	2	10	.
Bartenders....	1	.	2	.
Blacksmiths...	.	7	2	.
Butchers.....	1	1	.	.
Carpenters....	1	.	2	.
Clerks.....	3	1	.	1
Clergymen....	1	1	2	.
Coachmen.....	1	.	2	.
Cooks .....	1	.	.	.
Engineers.....	2	.	.	.
Farmhands....	.	9	.	6
Hodcarriers...	.	2	.	.
Houseservants.	9	1	.	3
Janitors.....	5	3	.	.
Laborers.....	74	106	.	29
Masons.....	2	.	6	.
Messengers....	5	.	.	.
Merchants.....	.	.	.	2
Millers.....	.	.	1	1
Miners.....	1	1	3	.
Musicians.....	1	.	.	.
Painters and P	.	3	.	.
Peddlers.....	1	.	.	.
Plasterers....	1	2	.	.
Pool-room Prop..	.	.	.	1
Porters.....	2	2	.	.
Physicians....	.	.	1	.
Quarrymen....	.	2	1	.
Railroad hands	.	1	2	.
Restaurateur..	.	.	.	1
Scavengers....	4	1	.	2
Scullions.....	1	.	.	.
Shoeblacks....	2	.	.	.
Soldiers.....	1	.	.	.
Stewards.....	.	.	.	6
Tailors.....	.	1	.	.
Teachers.....	1	2	.	.
Teamsters.....	18	16	20	.
Timers.....	.	1	.	.
Waiters.....	4	.	.	.
Wheelwrights.	.	.	1	.

If, now, we assume that the first class, earning between \$1.00 and \$5.00 per week, averages at least \$3.00; that the second class, earning from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per week, averages at least \$7.00; that those of the third class, earning \$10.00 and above, average at least \$12.00, then, with the "unknowns" averaged at \$4.00, we secure as the earning capacity per week for the first class, the sum of \$453.00, for the second class \$1,113.00, for the third class \$594.00, and for the "unknowns" \$212.00, or a grand total of \$2,372.00 per week for all the wage-earning negro males of Columbia. By dividing this amount by 417, the total number of male wage-earners, we obtain \$5.69 as the average weekly wage of negro men in Columbia.

## WEEKLY WAGES OF FEMALES.

Occupation	\$1 to \$5 per wk	\$5 to \$10 per wk	\$10 up per wk	Ave'ge of \$4 per wk
Boarding-house..	.	.		1
Cooks.....	57	15		21
Hairdressers..	.	1		2
Housekeepers..	4	.		32
Laundresses...	112	30		71
Laborers.....	8	.		3
Nurses.....	2	.		.
Peddlers.....	1	.		.
Scullions.....	1	.		.
Seamstresses..	9	2		3
Servants.....	29	.		16
Students.....	.	.		.
Teachers.....	2	5		.
Waitresses....	5	.		.
Totals.....	230	57		149



If, as in the case of the males, we assume that the first class averages at least \$3.00, that the second class averages at least \$7.00, that the "unknowns" (there are none of the third class) earn at least \$4.00, we secure as the earning capacity of class one, \$690.00, of class two \$371.00, and of the "unknowns" \$596.00, or a grand total of \$1,657.00 per week for all the wage-earning negro females of Columbia. Dividing this amount by 442, the total number of female wage-earners, we obtain \$3.75 as the average weekly wage of negro women in Columbia.

By adding the \$2,372.00 earned by the men per week to the \$1,657.00 earned by the women, we obtain \$4,029.00, a sum which is the money equivalent of the weekly ability of nearly all of Columbia's negro wage-earners of both sexes.

If, once more, we divide this amount by 859, the whole number of negro wage-earners, we obtain \$4.76, the equivalent in dollars and cents of the earning capacity per week of the average negro wage-earner of either sex.

Again, by dividing the grand total, \$4,029, by 1,916, Columbia's negro population, we find that the average man, woman and child has an income, from labor, of \$2.10 per week.

And this is practically all these people have to meet the expenses of living: to pay rent and taxes, to buy clothing and food, to provide church and lodge dues and insurance, to secure recreation, and to meet all the incidental demands of their situations, such as the doctor's fees and medical supplies in case of illness.

Of the 320 families reporting upon this particular point, only 133 had kitchen-gardens to help set the family table, and only 134 (frequently, of course, the same families) kept live stock (other than horses and mules, of which they had 96 head) to assist in increasing

the family income. Together the 134 families owned 372 chickens and ducks, 204 hogs, and 58 cows and calves.

There are in Columbia 18 negroes who are pensioners of the National Government. They receive, all told, \$157.00 per month. Only 14 were found who had an income from rents. This source netted them, altogether, \$141.00 per month.

It will readily be seen that the "white folks" must gratuitously support, from their larders, by way of the backdoor, a large proportion of the negro population of the town.

Since the above facts were collected a new enterprise has been started by several of the more intelligent and well-to-do negroes. It is a commercial venture in the shape of a grocery store on a more extensive scale than anything heretofore attempted by members of the race in Columbia. It remains to be seen whether or no success will crown the undertaking.

*Domestic "Help."* A discussion of the "servant girl problem" is not here proposed, nor yet an exhaustive statistical exhibition of the general domestic service existing in Columbia. What follows is offered simply in the way of "side-light" on the larger question of "master and servant" as it exists in the South.

Accurate information was secured from 33 white families—all of them well-to-do, some wealthy—on the following points: (1) how many servants each employed regularly; (2) what wages were paid; (3) how long they had been in their employ; (4) how many had been employed in succession in three years past; (5) whether those now employed were over or under 50 years of age.

The intent of the last question was to discover, if possible, a difference in the efficiency and "staying

quality" between those trained in slavery and those who have come upon the scene since the race obtained its freedom.

The results are as follows:

The 33 families were found to employ 39 servants, all of them negroes, as housegirls, cooks, nurses, and men-of-all-work.

The wages paid ranged from \$6.00 per month and "keep" (which frequently includes a room and fuel), for an untrained hand, to three times that sum for a competent servant. The average was \$9.78 per month.

During the three years preceding the enquiry these 33 families had employed no less than 141 different servants, or about 4 each, giving each servant an average of 9 months of service with a family. But it must be remembered that this average is secured by computing the terms of service of that kind of help which is at the command of well-to-do and wealthy families only. The general average term of service is much shorter.

One of the 33 families reported having had 24 servants in the three years; another 17; and still another, 12. Instances are numerous where the "help" was changed as often as every month, or even every week, for months in succession.

Thirty servants were under, only three over, 50 years of age.

It is the unanimous testimony of housekeepers that Columbia's colored "help" is, in nine out of every ten instances, utterly incompetent. It is ignorant, shiftless, lazy, impudent, and dishonest. But the whites have been so long accustomed to this kind of "help" in their homes that they accept the situation in a spirit of mingled indignant helplessness and philosophic resignation.

Almost incredible are the experiences told by Columbia housekeepers anent their relations with negro domestics. The problem seems to most of them a hope-

less one. Nothing can be done with subordinates who cannot learn, and would not if they could.

There is, of course, a "saving remnant," both men and women, of integrity and sufficient capacity. They are good citizens, and enjoy the confidence and respect of their white employers. It is a suggestive fact that they nearly all of them have much white blood in their veins.

There are, all told, not a half-dozen white domestic servants in Columbia. The local poor whites do not seem inclined to dispute the negro's supremacy in this department, and no systematic effort has ever been made to introduce white "help" from abroad.

## CHAPTER IV

### BENEVOLENT, INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SOCIETIES

An important feature of the social and economic situation of the negroes of Columbia, as elsewhere among the race in this country, is the rapid development and spread among them of all sorts of beneficial, insurance and "burial" societies. This is not, however, a phenomenon peculiar to negroes. The same craze is found among the whites, from whom the imitative negroes not only copy it, but by whom it is often imposed upon them for selfish purposes of exploitation.

The societies may be divided into two general classes, as they are organized and controlled by the negroes themselves, with functions partly economic and partly social, and as they are organized and managed for them by whites for purely insurance purposes, sometimes honestly and sometimes, it is to be feared, to prey upon an all too gullible people.

In Columbia there are at least eight societies of the former kind. Of these the Masons are the oldest, strongest, and most influential. The lodge was organized in ——. Its meetings are held in a room in the Boone County National Bank building, in the very heart of the city. Another flourishing society of this class is that of the Odd Fellows, organized in ——. A very much younger, but very vigorous society is that of the Knights of Pythias, organized in ——. The purely negro societies (all of them, by the way, secret and ritualistic) sum up a total of 332 members, male and female, with initiation fees ranging from \$1.50 to \$25.00, monthly dues from \$0.25 to \$0.85, and death benefits from merely burial expenses up to burial expenses and \$300.00 additional. Only one of the societies, the Odd

Fellows, seems to allow a sick benefit, \$3.00 per week. The 332 members, nearly one-sixth of Columbia's negro population, contribute regularly about \$115.00 per month, or \$1,380.00 per year into these societies as dues. This does not include the assessments which must necessarily follow upon any unusual increase in the death-rate of the membership.

The following table gives a comprehensive view of the status of the various societies in the spring of 1902:

#### NEGRO SECRET BENEFICIAL SOCIETIES.

NAME.	Mem-ber-ship	Initia-tion Fee	Mon-thly Dues	BENEFITS
Masons.....	69	\$25 00	.50	Burial expenses, \$50.00, and for family of deceased, \$100.00.
Odd Fellows....	41	\$3 00	.65	At death, \$175.00. Sick benefit of \$3.00 per week,
Knights of Pythias.....	29	\$7 50	.42 to .85	Burial expenses, and for family from \$150.00 to \$300.00.
Independent Order of Seven...	80	\$3 00	.25	Burial expenses, and for family \$100.00.
Old Order of Twelve.....	20	\$2 50	.25	Burial expenses, and for family \$75.00.
Sisters and Brothers of Jerusalem....	12	\$1 50	.25	Burial expenses.
Golden Queen Court.....	50	.....	.25	Burial expenses, \$50.00.
Union Benevo-lent Society...	31	\$5 00	.50	Burial expenses, \$80.00, and for family \$100.00.
Totals.....	332		\$115.00	



But very much more important from an economic standpoint are the two organizations operating among the negroes of Columbia but controlled by whites. The one, a purely insurance concern, and presumably a thoroughly reliable one, is the Metropolitan Insurance Company of New York. Complete statistics of this company's business with its local clients could not be obtained. It was a surprise to the writer to learn that, governed probably by the necessity imposed upon it by the impecuniosity of its dusky patrons, it does business with them almost entirely upon the petty five and ten cents weekly payments plan. It has between eight and nine hundred policy-holders in the county. The policies range from \$100.00 up to \$2,000.00. In April, 1902, it had in force one policy for \$2,000.00, eighteen for \$1,000.00, and thirty-seven for \$500.00. The others were below the last-named figure and mostly for \$100.00. It is perfectly safe to assume that its, say, 850 policy-holders pay \$70.00 per week, or \$3,640.00 per year to this concern as premiums. According to the company's agent the patrons keep up the payments of their premiums remarkably well. If he is not mistaken there is in this respect a vast difference between the patrons of his company and those of the "Co-operative Mystic League," the other concern managed by whites doing business in Columbia.

This "League" was organized in 1896 and has at this writing (April, 1902) 341 members or holders of its certificates. The most valuable certificate issued matures at \$2,000.00, the lowest at \$200.00. The average for those in force at the above date was \$500.00.

In addition to the insurance feature there is a "sick indemnity" scheme by which the highest certificate allows the holder a weekly benefit of \$10.00 in case of sickness and the lowest a benefit of \$2.50 in such a contingency.

The average cost to the 341 members of this combination scheme is \$0.50 per month per member. This would be about \$2,000.00 per year for the entire membership.

Combining the annual dues paid by the members of the eight secret societies and the annual premiums paid to the two insurance companies gives us a grand total of \$7,020.00 paid out per year by the Columbia negroes, mostly for the sake of a "respectable" burial.

A still more interesting exhibit is obtained when we consider the following facts, cheerfully furnished to the writer by the accommodating manager of the "League."

Of the whole number admitted to membership during the past six years, 38.50 per cent. never made a second payment, frequently did not complete the first; 72 per cent. of them lapsed during the first year; 5 per cent. more, after paying through the first year, lapsed during the next five years. In other words, 77 per cent. of the membership admitted during the past six years (since 1896) lapsed before the spring of 1902, leaving only a meagre 23 per cent. in force.

Comment upon these figures is unnecessary. Every reader can draw his own conclusions about the negro's inability to persevere long in a course of action looking to a future good if it involves a present self-denial. It is doubtless true that many are overpersuaded by glib agents to join these concerns in the first instance. But it is also true that many of them could readily make their payments if they could forego the doubtful benefits of frequent railroad excursions and similar diversions. Lamentable improvidence and wastefulness seem to be inherent traits of negro character.



## CHAPTER V

### RELIGIOUS LIFE

There was, of course, no such thing as a negro church in Columbia or Boone county before the Civil War. A few of the more intelligent and respectable negroes here as elsewhere were members of the white churches. For religious guidance and instruction the slaves were, as a rule, dependent almost entirely upon the thoughtfulness of the wives and daughters of their owners and upon the more or less fitful ministrations of the pastors of white churches. Negro "preachers," so called, sometimes held services in the white churches when these could be obtained, but the exercises, even amid the restraining influence of this environment, were usually only a shade removed from those current in the "quarters" and fields. Rapt songs, weird and plaintive music, sensuous exercises, exclamations and wails, together with "sermons" best described as "loud and long," made up the staple of worship.

Immediately after the war two negro preachers, W. P. Brooks, still living in Moberly, Missouri, and Barton Hillman, appeared upon the scene and organized in Columbia what is now the Second Baptist church, in the house occupied by Thad Lang. Soon after, in 1868, the African Methodist Episcopal church entered this field. The third organization was not effected until 1879, when a congregation of the Methodist Episcopal denomination came into being. The same year gave birth to the fourth and last church, that of the Christian Campbellites.

The following table gives a comprehensive view of the numerical and financial strength and the

benevolent activities of these churches. It will be seen that the two Methodist branches have a very decided numerical majority. They are followed, at some distance, by the Baptists, and far to the rear by the Christian Campbellites. The financial showing is chiefly remarkable because it reveals the fact that the 710 negro church members of Columbia give little or nothing for home and foreign missions or for local charities. About ten cents per member per year for these purposes and three dollars for all other purposes, does not reveal a very altruistic conception of religious obligation.

#### THE NEGRO CHURCHES OF COLUMBIA.

Denomination.	Members'p	Pastor's Salary	For H. & F. Miss.	For Cha'ty	For In-cid'l Ex	Value of Ch. Bld'g.	Value of Parsonage	Total Debt
Baptist..	251	\$ 600.00	\$20.00	.....	\$210.00	\$12,500.00	.....	\$4,500.00
A. M. E.	239	1,000.00	17.00	\$15.00	300.00	10,000.00	\$ 700.00	300.00
M. E. ...	162	200.00	5.00	11.00	125.00	4,000.00	300.00	1,700.00
Christian	58	.....	.90	.....	60.00	1,000.00	.....	.....
Totals.	710	\$1,800.00	\$42.90	\$26.00	\$695.00	\$27,500.00	\$1,000.00	\$6,500.00

The church buildings belonging to these different sects reflect to a certain extent the somewhat unusual munificence of the white congregations of Columbia in providing for themselves elegant edifices in which to worship God. The negro Baptist denomination, for example, has property on Broadway, Columbia's main thoroughfare, on which three of the white churches are situated, which is valued at \$12,500. Their house of worship is illustrated on another page. The African Methodist Episcopal denomination has property in the heart of the negro section valued at \$10,000. The Methodist Episcopal church owns property worth \$4,000. The Christian Campbellites value their frame house and lot at \$1,000.00. How much of all this prop-

erty was secured by persistent and extensive begging from the whites it is, of course, impossible to say. Nor must it be overlooked that it is still heavily encumbered with debt. But we have, nevertheless, the curious phenomenon of 1,916 negroes, composing 33.90 per cent of a community's population (but holding only 4.09 per cent. of that community's property, and represented in scarcely any line of business enterprise whatever) owning church property equal in value to nearly one-third of all their other property. When he attends church the Columbia negro is in surroundings not at all commensurate with his financial ability. The meager exhibit of the foregoing table in the way of contributions for other than local needs need not, therefore, surprise us.

The pastors of these churches at this writing are all men past middle life. In native ability, training and conduct they are probably quite above the average of the many negro "preachers" that infest the South, and curse rather than bless their people. Two of them have only an ordinary grammar school education, one is a graduate of a high school and holds, in addition, a degree of "Master of Ancient Languages" from an obscure school somewhere in Missouri, and the other has enjoyed special theological training under the direction of a white minister. Careful inquiry among the members of the churches failed to find more than an occasional regret, from the intelligent and progressive, that the pulpit ministrations of these men were intellectually and spiritually far too shallow to be of any value to their auditors. But, as in the case of many a white minister, the negro preacher simply obeys the law of supply and demand. He is content to achieve, as a rule, the standard which his flock sets for him. Poor leadership morally and empty sermons intellectually are much more easily condoned by the ordinary negro congrega-

tion than inability to draw the crowd and secure money and erect showy church edifices.

Negro religious life in the United States is something entirely unique, and the negro churches are its peculiar product. As elsewhere, the Columbia negro churches are primarily so many social centers around which the life of given groups revolve. Here, in addition to the baptisms, weddings, and funerals furnished by the natural course of events, are given concerts, suppers, fairs, literary exercises and other celebrations. Here societies, beneficial and otherwise, find congenial soil and atmosphere. Even the Sunday services, especially at night, frequently partake more of the nature of a social entertainment than of an earnest and devout attempt to worship God. The congregations are, as a rule, well behaved and well dressed, but there is a good deal of stirring about and suppressed excitement, and often considerable noise. The observer can plainly see two distinct elements engaged in a kind of struggle for supremacy, the old-time and fast disappearing "darky" with his "hallelujah religion" of genuine even though hysterical emotion, and the more "proper" younger generation with its efforts to imitate the perfunctory and stereotyped services of the white churches. The latter element will, of course, prevail.

The ordinary service consists of a great deal of music and singing after their kind, and a great deal of preaching after its kind. It is a pity that it cannot truthfully be said that the intelligent negro gets any real help from the pulpit efforts of his pastor. The preacher, as a rule, does little more than point out and urge, at the expense of much physical energy, certain well-known moral precepts. "Do right and you will go to heaven," is the burden of his message. Of course, if he himself should live up to this ideal and could get his people to follow, a vast deal of good would be ac-

complished. But, alas, in this also the negro is much like his white brother. The offertory is a feature never neglected and always emphasized. In fact, this part of the exercises not infrequently becomes the *piece de resistance* of the occasion. Taken all in all, there is very little in the service that bears directly upon the lives of an humble, ignorant and helpless people. Immorality of conduct and a very devout spirit still go hand in hand. Theft, drunkenness and lewdness are looked upon by the great majority as leniently as ever. Nor are they, on that account, chargeable with hypocrisy. The simple explanation is that a long and dark heredity has made it almost impossible for them rightly to adjust the relation between morality and religion. Superstition, especially a belief in witchcraft, as infantile as it is gross, still burdens their minds and hearts. At this writing the family cook is regaling her mistress with a recent terrible experience with a "hant." And this woman is young, above the average in intelligence, a devout church-member and a competent servant, long accustomed to intercourse with the best white families.



## CHAPTER VI

### EDUCATION

Although the Statutes of Missouri were never disgraced by legislation directly prohibiting the education of the slaves within her borders, the slave-holding portion of her people seem to have felt, with the same class all over the South, that the mental improvement of the slaves meant their dissatisfaction and possible insurrection and rebellion. The submission of the man with the dark skin was best secured by keeping his mind dark. Hence, persons of African descent, either free or slaves, who could read or write, were always striking exceptions to the prevailing illiteracy and mental stupor. Occasionally, as in an instance or two in Columbia, the anomalous situation was presented in which children of well-to-do and refined families received their earliest instruction from an intelligent house-servant, sometimes a hired man or woman, sometimes a slave.

Immediately after the cataclysm of the Civil War, and hand in hand with the efforts at political reconstruction, inroads upon the negro's centuries of ignorance began to be made by many more or less self-appointed educational missionaries from the North, as well as by the National Government through the Freedmen's Bureau. But the efforts were usually ill-advised, and the result was an almost irreparable injury to the race. Happily for the negroes of Columbia, their mental improvement was left entirely to their own care and that of those who understood them best—the white people of their own immediate neighborhood, their former masters.

The new Drake Constitution, a Republican instrument adopted in 1865, contained the (for Missouri) extraordinary provision that "separate schools may be

established for children of African descent. All funds provided for the support of public schools shall be appropriated in proportion to the number of children, without regard to color." This provision was, of course, extraordinary, not because there might be *separate* schools for the negroes, but because there might be schools for them at all.

Acting under the authority of this constitutional provision, a succeeding Democratic Assembly declared that "The board of education of any city, town or village, is hereby *required* to provide separate schools for such colored children as may reside within the limits of said city, town, or village." A further indication of the real state of public opinion on the question of separate schools for the races is given by the Democratic Constitution of 1875, which ordains that "separate free public schools *shall* be established for the education of children of African descent." The Assembly of 1889 ordered the establishment of such separate schools whenever there should be in any school district fifteen or more negro children of school age, such schools to be the same in conduct, management, control, advantages and privileges as for the white schools of corresponding grade. This Assembly also made it unlawful for a negro child to attend a white school or for a white child to attend a negro school. A subsequent Legislature made provision for combining contiguous school districts in which the number of children of school age was less than fifteen in each.

But in Columbia the education of the freedmen did not await the putting in motion of tardy and cumbrous government machinery. The high honor of recognizing and promptly acting upon the conviction, that the welfare of their race demanded the education of the children, belongs to four negro men, Gilbert Akers, John Lang, Louis Fisher, and Beverly Chapman. It was mainly through the efforts of these men, the former two

always free negroes, the latter one-time slaves, that the negroes themselves, aided by their white friends, raised a sufficient sum of money to erect the shell of a two-storied house as a school for negro children, on a lot (No. 309 of the town of Columbia) deeded for church and educational purposes by Gilbert Akers and wife for a nominal sum. Later, in 1868, the Freedmen's Bureau at Washington appropriated \$800.00 in aid of the enterprise. But for this money to become available it was necessary that the school property be placed under the control of a separate board, to be held "in trust for school purposes for the sole and exclusive use and benefit of the colored people of said township." This was accordingly done, Gilbert Akers and wife formally consenting. Thus was launched the first negro school in Columbia, in Boone county and probably in central Missouri. It began its career with sixty pupils and two teachers, and was named, in honor of Chas. E. Cummings, its first principal and a negro of education and integrity, "Cummings Academy."

Soon afterward, as early as 1872, this "Academy" became a part of the public school system of Columbia township, and since that time has shared the varying fortunes of that system. In — the original "Cummings Academy" was destroyed by fire. In 1885 the board of education replaced it, on another lot, with the present substantial brick structure, issuing for the purpose, upon a practically unanimous vote of the district, \$5,000.00 worth of 6 per cent. bonds. The new structure was called "The Frederick Douglass School," in honor of the distinguished negro of that name.

This building, reproduced on another page, is a two-storied brick structure, containing eight spacious rooms. It has a convenient seating capacity for 400 pupils and seems amply large enough for present demands. The rooms are well lighted, and are heated by steam; but they are kept none too clean. Hat and cloak rooms





COLORED BAPTIST CHURCH, COLUMBIA.



FRED DOUGLASS SCHOOL, FOR COLORED CHILDREN.



seem to be entirely wanting. The exterior of the building is bare and dingy, and the grounds innocent of all improvements.

Statistics to assist in tracing the progress of negro education in Columbia are almost entirely lacking. Here as elsewhere in the slave-holding communities it took the authorities a long time to appreciate the fact that, no longer chattels to be valued at so many dollars per head, the negroes were still worth counting, except, indeed, for political purposes. But the following table throws at least some light into the darkness. It contains, as far as authentic figures can be found, the enumeration of negro children of school-age (6 to 20 years) in the school district from year to year since 1867; the number actually enrolled at school each year since that date; the percentage of enumerated actually enrolled; as well as other interesting data:

NEGRO SCHOOL STATISTICS OF COLUMBIA SINCE 1867.

Year.	Enu	Enr	Per ct of Enumer.	No. T's.	Average Salary.	School Term
1867-8	373	63	16.09	2	.....	...
1881-2	470	264	56.17	.	.....	...
1887-8	562	364	64.77	.	.....	...
1890-1	...	...	.....	7	40.00	160
1891-2	630	...	.....	7	40.00	180
1892-3	681	...	.....	7	40.00	180
1893-4	681	456	66.96	7	40.00	180
1894-5	581	405	69.07	7	40.00	180
1895-6	699	420	60.08	7	40.00	180
1896-7	768	...	.....	8	40.62	180
1897-8	746	411	59.09	8	40.62	180
1898-9	808	395	48.55	8	40.62	180
1899-0	797	387	48.55	8	40.62	180
1900-1	829	358	43.18	8	40.62	180
1901-2	763	378	49.54	8	43.12	180
1902-3	758	417	55.00	8	43.12	180

These figures are both encouraging and discouraging. It is significant of the eagerness with which the emancipated slave invaded the Promised Land of learning that almost immediately upon the opening of "Cumings Academy," its capacity was severely taxed. And it is interesting to note that for nearly an entire generation, up to 1895, or during the influence of those who had come directly under the sway of the surpassing joys and hopes of emancipation, the high-tide of desire for an education was steadily maintained. As late as the school-year of 1894-5 as many as 69.07 per cent. of the enumerated children between 6 and 20 years of age were attending school. But during the succeeding year the percentage dropped to 60.08; in 1898-9 it was 48.88, and in 1900-1 it went down to 43.18. In 1901-2 there a slight increase, and a still further one in 1902-3. It must be added that this decrease in attendance can, in part, be accounted for by local conditions, such as bitter opposition to the school's principal by a part of the negro population.

These are the discouraging figures. They seem to indicate that the present generation of Columbia negroes cares less for the benefits of education than the the one immediately preceding and coming up from slavery. It is not easy to suggest an explanation. The decline in attendance began upon the heels of the financial panic of 1893-4. Perhaps, the pressure for existence having become heavier, it was found impossible to keep the children at school as long as formerly. As a matter of fact, only an insignificant percentage of the 378 enrolled in 1901-2 were over 15 years old. Perhaps (and this would be the sadder), the race is losing heart, has given up hope of betterment, is becoming indifferent to the advantages of an education, and is content to let the coming generation shift for itself as best it can without it.

There may be still another explanation. It is possible that a kind of sifting process is going on within the race which is separating the chaff from the wheat. The former, having lost the impetus of hope imparted by freedom and equality, is sinking back into confirmed ignorance and its concomitant conditions; the latter, representing what is best in negro blood, is persevering toward the goal set for itself when freedom first beckoned to achievement.

But we must note, on the other hand, the steadily increasing efficiency of the school itself. While the negro patrons seem to be becoming somewhat indifferent to the value of an education, their white guardians are steadily, if slowly, increasing their opportunities to equip themselves for life's struggles, and this in the face of the fact that the negroes pay practically nothing toward the task in the way of taxes, only about \$700.00 out of a total of \$18,000.00, and seem, in addition, quite indifferent to the efforts to improve their conditions in this respect.

The Fred Douglass school-building is as good as many and better than some buildings for the use of white children in communities no smaller than Columbia. The teachers are usually the best that can be had for the salaries offered.

The curriculum of studies, embracing seven grades is, to all intents and purposes, that of the white schools.

The school is not, of course, in articulation with the local white high school, but has a high-school department of its own, in which pupils are carried as far as the end of the second year's course in the white school, and its certificates are accepted by the Lincoln Institute, the State's normal school for negroes, at Jefferson City, Missouri; by Smith College, at Sedalia, Missouri, and by the Western College, at Macon, Missouri; both negro institutions. During the session of 1902-3 Lincoln Insti-

tute had ten graduates of the Douglass School; Smith College had one; the Western College, two. This showing does not reveal a very passionate craving for "higher education" on the part of Columbia's negro youth. The fact that there were ten graduates (seven women and three men) at Lincoln Institute, where normal, industrial, and agricultural training receive emphasis, is, however, a wholesome feature of an otherwise discouraging situation.

## CHAPTER VII

### HEALTH AND MORALS

The negro's vitality, his ability to resist the rigors of climate and the inroads of disease, satisfy the inexorable law of labor, and propagate his kind is, for the race itself, the most important phase of the problem we are considering.

The evidence furnished by the United States census seems incontrovertibly to show that the negro has much less power of resistance in the struggle for life than his Caucasian competitor. This holds true both North and South, and from Maine to Florida. The statistics upon which this conclusion is based have usually been gathered in the larger cities, the congested centers of population where the death-rate, for obvious seasons, is higher than elsewhere. But approximately the same results are obtained by the investigations in Columbia. In the United States the average age at death, for whites is 35.8 years, for colored (which includes a negligible number of Chinese, etc.), it is 28.0 years. The following table is of great interest:



DEATH RATE FOR CERTAIN CAUSES, BY RACE, U. S.  
CENSUS, 1900.

Causes.	White.	Negro.
Cancer and Tumor.. . . .	66.7	48.0
Consumption.....	173.5	485.4
Diarrheal Diseases.....	129.5	214.0
Diphtheria .....	45.9	32.0
Heart Disease and Dropsy..	187.4	221.1
Influenza. ....	23.6	32.0
Liver, diseases of.. ..	22.8	20.9
Malarial Fever.....	6.5	63.2
Measles .....	13.1	15.2
Nervous System, diseases of	213.7	308.0
Old Age. ....	53.5	66.7
Pneumonia.....	184.8	355.3
Scarlet Fever.. . . .	12.0	2.6
Typhoid Fever.....	32.4	67.5
Urinary Organs, diseases of	99.8	157.3

The noticeable feature of this table is the tremendously high rate for the negroes shown for the more or less constitutional diseases like consumption, pneumonia, and heart and nervous diseases.

It is to be regretted that it was found impossible to treat this important phase of the subject with the fullness of detail it deserves and demands. But in Columbia, as in other small communities, vital statistics are unknown quantities. There is not even such a simple process as the recording of births and deaths.\* Hence, the meagerness of the following figures and the vagueness of the generalizations.

During the year closing with October, 1901, there were no less than 48 deaths among the negroes of Columbia, giving a death-rate of 24 per 1,000. Thirty-

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\*The next Missouri legislature ought to remedy this serious obstacle to all kinds of sociological investigations.

four of them were of adults and 14 of children. They were due to at least 20 causes. We give them in detail for what they are worth as information: accidents 4, bronchitis 3, croup 1, childbirth 1, cancer 1, cholera infantum 1, gangrene of lungs 1, la grippe 1, measles 1, senile debility 2, pneumonia 5, rheumatism 2, scarlet fever 1, spasms 1, inflammation of stomach 1, tonsilitis 1, tuberculosis 5, tumor 1, typhoid 6, whooping-cough 2, unknown (infants) 7.

A further interesting but limited collection of data was furnished by Columbia's only negro physician, Dr. Perry, a man of education and ability in his profession. From January 1 to April 1, 1902, a most trying season of the year, Dr. Perry had under treatment the following 103 cases of diseases: asthma 1, aneurism 1, bronchitis 1, convulsion 1, chronic gastritis 1, eczema 3, female diseases 15, general debility 8, heart disease 3, insanity 1, la grippe 6, pneumonia 11, rheumatism 6, smallpox 11, scarlet fever 5, sexual diseases 14, tonsilitis 5, tuberculosis 11.

The notable things about these two lists are, first, the large number ill with and dying from lung troubles, pneumonia and tuberculosis; second, the large number under treatment for sexual diseases, chiefly gonorrhoea.

The explanations of the high death-rate among Columbia negroes lie upon the surface. A large proportion of them, particularly children, do not receive adequate medical attention in illness. If the fact shown above, that 14 of the 48 deaths in 1901 were of children, and the additional fact that at the same time only 161 children over 6 years of age could be found, have any significance, then either the infant mortality must be frightful, or there must be a still more hideous explanation. The high mortality is due, often, to ignorance, to the prohibitive cost of professional aid, and to positive criminal neglect on the part of parents. The sanitary

conditions prevailing in the sections by rigid caste selection set aside for negro residents are simply appalling. The houses are, as a rule, one, two, or three-room "shacks" into which large families are indiscriminately crowded. Water for all purposes is generally drawn from unwholesome wells or cisterns. Garbage, in the majority of cases, is thrown into the yard to the chickens and hogs, or left there to decay and breed its disease, dispensing germs in air and water and soil. This was the actual condition of things in 73 out of 132 houses inspected. The interiors were little if any better. Out of 208 examined, 57 had to be classed as "bad," frequently "very bad;" 60 as "fair;" and only 91 as "good." It is a perfectly fair statement that 50 per cent. of the negro houses of Columbia are in every way unfit to be classed as "houses" at all. A very few compare favorably with the houses of well-to-do whites. The two extremes are illustrated on another page.

It must be added that, simply as places put up for human habitations, a large proportion of these houses ought to be condemned and torn down. Certainly, a heavy weight of responsibility rests here upon some property owners, either too thoughtless or too greedy to make even the most needful repairs. The houses are often so poorly constructed that they keep out neither summer rains nor winter snows. Floors are frequently on the ground, and ceilings low. City water is only occasionally found. There is neither plumbing nor drainage. Bath-rooms are practically unknown. The city sewer is easily within reach, but it is folly to expect owners to make costly connections when the houses are only worth from \$50.00 to \$150.00! Noxious vermin abound and little effort is made to exterminate them. The results of all this upon the health of the occupants can easily be imagined.

Why do not these people refuse to live in such



ONE OF THE BEST NEGRO HOMES IN COLUMBIA.



ONE OF THE WORST NEGRO HOMES IN COLUMBIA.



quarters? The question betrays the ignorance of him who asks it. Many of these people have no desire to leave their wretched houses, and many of them could not if they would. Their incomes make better accommodations impossible.

A glance at the following comprehensive table of housing conditions among the Columbia negroes will reveal a frightfully typical state of affairs:

HOUSING CONDITIONS AMONG COLUMBIA NEGROES.

Rooms Occupied	Number in Family.												Fam's.	Ind'ls.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
1	2	4	4	3	1	3	3	.	.	.	.	.	20	78
2	4	23	22	17	17	16	3	3	2	1	1	1	109	438
3	6	17	19	22	19	17	8	6	3	2	2	.	121	540
4	1	6	10	12	7	1	7	2	5	.	.	.	51	236
5	.	.	3	3	2	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	9	41
6	.	.	1	.	.	1	3	.	.	.	.	.	5	30
7	.	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	7
8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	...	.....
9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	...	.....
10	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	4
Totals. ....													318	1,374

Three hundred and eighteen families are included in this table. They sum up 1,374 individuals. Of this total number of families 186 were renters and 132 owned the places which they called "home." Under what conditions are they housed? The table reveals that 20 families, with 78 individuals, an average of 4 to the family, occupy, each, 1 room; 109 families, with 438 individuals, occupy, each, 2 rooms, or 2 persons to a room; but one of these families has 12 members, or 6 persons to a room; another has 10 members, or 5 persons to a room; two others have 9 members; three have 8; and



three 7. 121 families, with 540 individuals, occupy, each, 3 rooms, or about one and a half persons to a room; but two of these families have 11 members; two have 19; three have 9; and six have 8. Fifty-one families, with 236 individuals, occupy, each, 4 rooms, or about 1 for each room; but five of these families have 9 members; two have 8; and seven have 7. Nine families, with 41 individuals, occupy, each, 5 rooms, or 1 to a room; but one of these families has ten members.

Only those who have thoughtfully explored these habitations can begin to conceive the pitiful, tragic and inevitable results of this close herding together of men, women and children, not only members of families, but even boarders, often into a single room under circumstances where modesty must be forever a stranger and in which vice ensues as certainly as physical disease grows out of the noxious hygienic situations. What kind of traditions, sentiments and affections about the home and family can develop under such conditions, in such an atmosphere? Is it any wonder that the monogamic family with its chivalrous treatment of woman and parental responsibility, does not appeal to the average negro? One result is seen in the fact that although the negro population of Boone county is less than one-fifth that of the whites, it furnishes almost exactly as many actual divorces, or, in proportion to the population, approximately 500 per cent more than the whites! From 1898 to 1902, inclusive, 117 divorces were granted by the Boone County Circuit Court, of which 56 were to negroes, 55 to whites and 6 unascertainable. Said a member of the race and an earnest worker for its betterment: "What can one do for people who insist on living ten in a room, and two of them just married?" What, indeed?

And now, what do those who rent pay for their wretched accommodations? The figures are tabulated below and speak for themselves:



TABLE OF RENTS PAID BY COLUMBIA NEGROES.

Rent per month.	No. of Rooms Occupied.					Total Fami- lies	Total.
	1	2	3	4	5		
1.00	.	1	..	.	..	1	\$ 1.00
2.00	3	2	..	1	..	6	12.00
3.00	6	6	5	.	..	17	51.00
4.00	1	23	11	2	1	43	172.00
5.00	3	45	22	4	2	76	380.00
6.00	.	5	18	6	..	29	174.00
7.00	.	..	5	2	1	8	56.00
8.00	..	..	4	..	.	4	32.00
9.00	..	..	..	..	.	...	.....
10.00	..	..	..	1	2	3	30.00
	13	87	65	15	6	186	\$908.00

Total rent paid, per month, \$908.00; per year, \$10,896. Total number of families included in table, 186. Average rent per family per month, \$5.81; per year, \$69.72.

But after all that can be said about the hygienic and sanitary conditions existing among the negroes and operating as causes for the high death rate among them, it remains to be stated that the most potent cause of all is the negro's constitutional weakness and defect. Whether such weakness and defect be an inheritance from his forebears in Africa, or a result of climate, or of debauchery and vice since his transplantation to America, the fact of its existence seems to be unquestioned. In Columbia almost the entire negro population is more or less tainted by syphilitic poisoning and is on that account, peculiarly liable to tubercular diseases. Pneumonia and consumption are the negro's most dreaded scourges.

Whether or not the ravages of disease can be stopped at this late day, is an open question. The radical difficulty in the way of effectual remedy is the stubborn fact that the causes of the excessive mortality lie not merely in the conditions of life as they now obtain, but in race traits and tendencies also. And these traits and tendencies have been emphasized by generations of vicious practices, and to-day bad whiskey, cocaine, unsanitary surroundings, and sexual immorality continue the sad work of debilitation. Signs of recuperation are not perceptible. In Columbia improvement in housing conditions, the observance of the simplest rules of sanitation, at least a relative moral reformation through the establishment of something like a true home life, must precede any possible improvement in the negro's ability to resist disease. Under present conditions the possibility of materially lessening the death-rate is very remote indeed.

That the birth rate among negroes is in excess of that among the whites is a fact usually assumed but not always borne out by the figures. Where statistics have been gathered in the Northern States they usually give an excessive mortality with a very low birth-rate, revealing the fact that the race is not self-sustaining in those latitudes.\* In harmony with these results it was found that only 34 negro children were born in Columbia in 1901, giving a birth-rate of 17 + per thousand, against a death-rate of 24 +. But the birth-rate would always be much higher if nature's process were not so generally interfered with. Among the negroes, as among the whites, also, the birth-rate is inextricably involved with their morals, and statistics are altogether unreliable as indices of their ability to hold their own numerically. Birth-rate statistics of negroes in Columbia simply show how many children, legitimate or otherwise, the mothers

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\*Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, ch. II.

have seen fit to allow to be born. Thus, the fact that only 161 children under 6 years of age could be found at a given date, and the further fact that there were not less than 60 couples living together as husbands and wives, who were childless, does not necessarily mean a naturally low birth-rate, or a high infant mortality. These figures are much more eloquent of a more frightful fact, that of deliberate pre-natal murder. Reliable local medical authority informs the writer that "dozens" of unborn children are disposed of every year, either by the mothers directly or by the aid of medical quacks for a trifling fee.

The negroes are still controlled by animal impulses. One of the things which distinguishes them, as a race, from the Caucasians, is their "sensual concretism."\* Physical stimulation is their chief craving and highest enjoyment. Their inclinations in any direction are seldom checked by reason. In the case of nature's most potent instinct of sex, a scarcely appreciable proportion of the race ever makes any effort whatever to keep it within due metes and bounds. Sadly deficient morally as slaves, they are even more imperfect to-day. Hence, the relations existing between the sexes are exceedingly lax. As a matter of fact we seem to have, in Columbia, a perilous approach to that state of promiscuity postulated by a certain school of anthropologists as man's most primitive sexual condition. The whites usually assume it as a common-place that *all* negro women have a price. But it can not be too emphatically said that this is certainly too sweeping and does a grievous injustice to the worthy few. Repeated inquiries of members of the race itself both men and women, elicited the opinion that at least 85 or 90 per cent of the women were unchaste. Though this estimate may be too high, yet the pitiful thing is that the impropriety and

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\*Schultze, *Psychologie der Naturvölker*, p. 38.

depravity of sexual immorality is only dimly appreciated even by the few virtuous ones. A part of the responsibility for this state of things can not, of course, be evaded by the whites. Too little is done by them to make the negro better in this respect.

In Columbia as, unfortunately, everywhere else, lax sexual relations exist not only among negro men and women, but also (and of more importance, because of its results upon the races) between white men and negro women, especially mulattoes. The condition is locally doubtless accentuated by the presence of an unusually large number of males. But whatever its cause, the condition exists, and a visit to the Fred Douglass school, or observation of any large gathering of negro children, will vividly reveal by the surprising number of mulattoes, quadroons and octoroons, the results of what is constantly going on but what everybody is quite willing to ignore or forget—race amalgamation! In Columbia it is going on steadily, increasingly. The distinct negro type, dolichocephalic, prognathous, kinkyhaired, and black, is gradually disappearing, and the mulatto, and quadroon types are steadily becoming more evident. But, unhappily, already weak and tainted, the accession of new blood from the Caucasian obtained by the negroes through this inter-racial concubinage and prostitution is not always the most desirable. And even if it were, the ultimate result would still be doubtful. History supplies us with quite a number of reliable examples of badly adjusted race amalgam. Hybrids of widely differentiated races always exhibit the stigmata of physical, mental and moral deterioration, and the results are already plainly noticeable in Columbia, where the “hybrids” and *their descendants* are an ever accumulating quantity of morbidity.

The conditions of the situation, the copulation of white men with negro women, only in rarest instances

the reverse, admit of only one result—the gradual disappearance of the negro *as a negro*. That is precisely what is taking place in Columbia.

In 1867, General Pope, in charge of reconstruction in Georgia, Alabama, and Florida, expressed the conviction that the negro's progress was such that, if continued, "five years will have transferred intelligence and education, so far as the masses are concerned, to the colored people of this district." The blind partisanship of that day may easily account for such a distorted view.

But in 1883 Prof. C. A. Gardiner, of Brooklyn, New York, predicted that in 30 years the negroes of the South would be superior to the whites in numbers, wealth, and intelligence, and that within a century the Southern whites would be completely absorbed by the negro. It is not known whether the professor meant to be taken literally or whether he was perpetrating a sociological joke. The signs then and now all go to show that there is a gradual but sure infusion of white blood into the black race, which means, unless all historic examples fail, the sure absorption of the weaker by the stronger, of the blacks by the whites, in the next few generations. This will give us a solution of the race question no less radical than the total disappearance of the negro *as a negro*. It seems to be the only solution which the conditions of the situation will admit. Incidentally it may be observed just here that Mr. Herbert Spencer would have found it somewhat difficult to square his theory of a race-preservation instinct with the facts as they exist in the South to-day.



## CHAPTER VIII

### CRIME

Anything like an adequate treatment of negro crime in Columbia is almost an impossibility under present conditions. No official statistics bearing upon the subject are kept, much less published. The figures here brought together were slowly and painfully gathered from court dockets and the private memoranda of the prosecuting attorney, in consultation with that official, the city's police judge, and the justices of the peace. As far as they go these figures are reliable. Unfortunately they are far from adequate. Consisting of the records for a brief space of time, they only show the status of this phase of the problem for that time. But in order to understand their full significance the figures for the same length of time ten years earlier should be placed side by side with them. But that is not now possible.

However, to attempt to measure crime by the number of arrests and convictions for a given period is, to say the least, a very unsatisfactory proceeding. Crime is always a symptom of pathological social conditions that lie far beyond the reach of policemen and courts and, too often, further still beyond their comprehension. Arrests and convictions oftener actually make criminals than reform them. And the difficulty is greatly increased whenever and wherever the negro is concerned. There can be no doubt whatever that the alertness, efficiency, and conscientious performance of duty by the blue-coated representatives of the law are everywhere somewhat increased when the offenders happen to have black skins. Their conviction is always also much more certain. This is due, in part, to the

inability of the prisoners to secure the necessary legal assistance, and, in part, to the *sang froid* with which the average white judge and jury convict the negroes brought before them. There seems to exist a tacit assumption that if the prisoner does not happen to be guilty of the particular crime charged, he ought to be locked up anyhow on general principles!

And yet the number of arrests for a given period does, in a crude way, measure crime. The following tables and figures throw an imperfect light upon this phase of our problem in Columbia.

#### CONVICTIONS IN CITY POLICE COURT, 1901.

1901	Drunkness,...	Disturbing the Peace.....	Lewdness.....	Gaming.....	Assault.....	Concealed Weapons .....	Solicitation.....	Adultery.....	Vagrancy.....	Petit Larceny.....	Against Various City Ordinances..	Total.....	Per cent to Population.....	Per cent to Race...
Whites..	111	45	25	17	5	2			5		23	233	4.1	6.1
Negroes.	37	60	40	24	24	2	5	2		3	15	213	3.7	11.6

In this table the large number of convictions of whites for drunkenness is worthy of notice, as far in excess proportionately, of the number of negroes convicted for this misdemeanor. On the other hand, the negro's characteristic traits appear conspicuously in the very high proportion of convictions he furnishes for disturbing the peace, lewdness, gaming, assault. It is noteworthy that these are all mild reproductions of conspicuous features of savage characters. While there are five cases of vagrancy against the whites the negroes seem to be entirely exempt. But this conclusion would be a serious mistake. Jail and workhouse facilities would be totally inadequate if the police would make ar-



rests among the negro population for this cause. Twenty-five per cent of them would be regularly behind the bars! Here again we seem to have the evidence of ancestral heritage: want of forethought, inaptitude for sustained labor, etc.\*

In 1902 there were 430 convictions in this court, sixteen less than in 1901; 175 were of whites and 255 of negroes. We know of no explanation for the very marked decrease for the whites with the corresponding increase for the negroes over the figures for the previous year.

In the courts of the two justices of the peace with jurisdiction in Columbia township (population, 1900, whites, 6,666; negroes, 2,476; a total of 9,142), there were 146 convictions in 1900, 92 of whites and 64 of negroes, or 1.6 per cent of the total population for the whites and 0.7 per cent of the total population for the negroes. For the whites, 1.4 per cent of the white population, and for the negroes, 2.6 per cent of the negro population. In 1902, there were 187 convictions, 106 of whites, 81 of negroes, or for the whites, 1.1 per cent, and for the negroes, 0.8 per cent, of the total population of the township. For the whites, 1.6 per cent of the white population, and for the negroes, 3.3 per cent of the negro population. The negroes furnished about twice as much crime as the whites, in proportion to population.

The following table gives the convictions, by race and crime in the Boone County Circuit Court for 1901:

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\*Havelock, Ellis, *The Criminal*, p. 209.

# CONVICTIONS IN THE BOONE COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT FOR 1901.

1901	Murder.....	Burglary.....	Grand Larceny.....	Pett Larceny.....	Assault.....	Forgery.....	Embezzlement.....	Disturbing the Peace.....	Illegal sale of Liquors.....	Unlawful Co-habitation.....	Totals ..
Whites..	2		1	1	2	1	1	1	25	1	35
Negroes.	1	4	2	1					4		12

During 1901 and 1902 there were 82 convictions in this court, of which only 12 were negroes. The large number of convictions of whites is explained by the special efforts made to overtake the illegal sale of liquor in Columbia and elsewhere in the county. Several individuals were each convicted on as many as six and eight counts.

## CHAPTER IX

### POLITICS

A discussion of the advisability and justice of the sudden enfranchisement of the negro in 1866 is not here intended. It is assumed that to-day there is no divergency of unbiased opinion as to his then total unfitness for the proper exercise of responsibilities so grave to himself and so far-reaching to the nation. When the ballot was first put into his hand he was as incapable as a Hottentot of rightly understanding and performing the high duties which the chances of war had thrust upon him. How he understood and performed them the history of the "reconstruction period" amply illustrates. He quickly became a dangerous enemy to just and stable government. Anarchy everywhere followed his elevation to power. That the social and political institutions of the South survived even the brief years of his supremacy is due as much to the utter impotence of the negro himself, as to the race-instinct which was aroused to its utmost self-assertion in the alarmed Caucasian. The momentous issues involved, the fact that not only civil but social questions also seemed to be at stake, and that everything dear to them as men seemed to be in danger of subversion, touched the whites of every class and condition to the quick and united them into a vast, solid voting machine as over against the vast and solid thousands of ignorant and sinister votes of the blacks. And the party alignments formed more than 35 years ago exist, with only rare exceptions, at the present day. And the average negro is scarcely one whit more fit to cast a ballot now than was the average negro 35 years ago. The writer's vote

in school and bond-issue elections, not to speak of great national and international party policies, like the tariff and the money standard, has been nullified more than once by a big "buck nigger" who followed him at the polls.

Though not numerically strong enough in the State to jeopardize, directly, the best interests of the commonwealth, the negro votes in Missouri would become a most formidable factor in any political contest in which the white votes might be more evenly divided than at present. In such case the negro vote, one-third of which is illiterate, would become the controlling element in the elections. An analysis of the political situation will make this clear.

PARTY LINES IN MISSOURI, 1900.

	Demo'tic	Repu'can	Prog. Peo.	Proh'tion	Soc. Dem	Soc. Labor
State. ...	351,922	314,092	4,244	5,965	6,139	1,294
Boone county	4,840	1,679	47	53	21	3
Columbia	996	804	4	11	7	

There are in Missouri 809,797 white and 46,887 negro males 21 years old and over, 855,684 in all. In Boone county there are 6,690 whites and 1,125 negroes of voting age. In Columbia there are 1,098 whites and 445 negroes of this class. The tabulated vote of the State given above, reveals how this mass of voters divides along political lines. It does not, however, classify the vote "by color." But it is well known that only with the rarest exceptions the negroes here as elsewhere in the country still vote with the Republican party. This is illustrated in Boone county where, of 1,125 negro voters, certainly not more than 15 or 20 vote the Demo-

cratic ticket. In Columbia, with a negro voting population of 445, not more than six are Democrats—and that despite the fact that they have nothing to hope for from the Republicans in the way of “spoils.” No negro has ever held federal office in Boone county. Even the janitor of the Columbia post office is, at this writing, a white man. Thus far Boone county and Columbia have been regarded by the party managers as so safely Democratic that no particular attention has been paid to the negro vote. It would ordinarily be useless to spend money upon it. But in elections other than State and National in which “party lines” are not sharply drawn, the negro vote of Columbia has shown itself to be excessively venal. Even in school elections it is an open secret that scores of “black ballots” have been bought by white men with a few gallons of poor whiskey!

## CHAPTER X

### THE NEGRO'S FUTURE

Two alien races cannot occupy the same territory indefinitely on terms of perfect equality. All sentimentalists to the contrary notwithstanding, race consciousness, with its resulting affinities and repulsions, exists and operates. What, therefore, will be the final destiny of the American negroes? If there is any solution of the problem presented by their number, poverty, ignorance, immorality and general helplessness, other than the one indicated in the chapter on their health and morals, it must come to the surface speedily or the problem will be beyond the reach of helpful or even possible interference.

It can not be said too emphatically that all schemes for the solution of the problem by the forcible application of mechanical means by the stronger race are altogether impracticable. The plan, for example, to deport to some independent territory beyond the seas some eight or nine millions of persons, holding hundreds of millions of dollars of property, and for generations closely dove-tailed into the economic situation of the nation, breaks down by its own weight. Even if transportation facilities and money enough could be obtained for such a scheme, \* its accomplishment would not only leave the South's agricultural and manufacturing industries paralyzed for generations, it would also sound

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\*If one ship, carrying 1000 passengers, should leave American shores each day of the year, it would take 25 years or longer to complete the transportation of these millions—making no allowances for increase by birth. And at the minimum cost per capitum of \$50.00, the transportation would mean the expenditure of \$500,000,000, not including, of course, remuneration for loss of property, of which they hold \$700,000,000.



the death knell of whatever hopes for the negro's betterment may be entertained to-day by philanthropist and sociologist. The South can not suddenly dispense with the negro's labor, nor can the negro dispense with the white man's supervision and control. Nowhere and at no time has the negro race shown itself capable of self-government. Africa is still a wilderness, except where the white man has planted his foot. Hayti and San Domingo are rapidly reverting to barbarism. Liberia is a failure. "Reconstruction days" in the South throw an interesting light upon the subject. Whenever in this country the negroes are allowed to follow their strongly gregarious instincts there also we find among them the most imperfect socialization. Contact with and supervision by the whites is essential to their welfare.

Of course, the same arguments apply to the segregation of the negroes anywhere on this continent.

Nor is their education, as at present conceived and practiced, the looked-for panacea. The trouble with the negro is not merely that he is ignorant. A few years of proper schooling could easily remedy that deficiency. The difficulty is more radical and lies embedded in the racial character, in the very conditions of existence. The negro race lacks those elements of strength that enable the Caucasian to hold its own, and win its way, and bring things to pass. Negroes cannot create civilizations. They only prosper under tutelage, under rigorous restriction. Theirs is the child-race, left behind in the struggle for existence because of original unfavorable environment and consequent inheritance of physical and mental conditions that foredoom to failure their competition on equal terms with other races. "That the convolutions in the negro brain are less numerous and more massive than in the European appears certain."<sup>\*</sup> The fundamental equality sometimes claimed

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<sup>\*</sup>Waltz, *Anthropologie*, vol. II. p. 208.



for him by sentimentalists is contradicted both by physiology and history.

As a matter of fact, the vast sums expended by philanthropists in planting and equipping institutions for the higher literary and scientific culture of the race—for what is always the flower and fruitage of a long, slow evolutionary process—have not been justified by any appreciable practical results. The fact that the number of graduates from such institutions has increased but slightly from year to year certainly does not indicate a very large return from the investment. This is especially true when we remember that education does not, *eo ipso*, transform a man morally. It may be that the pedagogical methods heretofore pursued are alone at fault, but amid present conditions negro “graduates” find themselves sadly out of place. What the negro most needs is industrial training, the inculcation of the work-habit, to fit him for at least relative industrial efficiency. Labor, foresight, self-control—these are the lessons that the negro must learn. And it will take more than one generation to drill them into him.\*

In all the discussion about educating the negro, fitting him thereby for a “higher sphere,” the fact is usually forgotten that in the keen competition called the “struggle for existence” the negro must not only meet those of his own racial calibre, but others who are man for man far more able, the masterful Caucasians, who have not only trained minds and hands enough for their own needs, but an overplus with which to dominate the destinies of less fortunate peoples. In the free movements of human society men always find the level at which their abilities fit them into the economic and social fabric. Attempts to order it differently, to change a man's level artificially, to fit him unnaturally into his surroundings, can produce nothing but confusion.

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\*Keane, *Ethnology*, p. 46.    Waitz, *Anthropologie*, vol. I, p. 106.

That is the negro problem in a nutshell. He is out of place in America. Nature never intended that this country should be his habitat. And most of the efforts heretofore made to improve his conditions here simply repeat the initial mistake. Education cannot make a \$10,000 man out of a ten-cent boy. Neither can education make a Caucasian out of an Ethiopian. Education can not make a gentleman out of a white man who has several generations of low-grade blood in his veins. Much less can it take a negro, with an inferior cranial capacity and a poorer brain development, and with centuries of superstition and immorality rioting in his blood, and elevate him to a position side by side with a Caucasian inheritor of a millennium of glorious history. It is simple fact that no matter how well you educate him, the negro cannot compete with the white man, man for man. It is like putting a child of ten against a man of forty. In this very fact, however, lies the hope of the race. The unfit are thereby being weeded out and the fit alone, however few in number, will survive. That some negroes with white blood in their veins rise above the level of their race merely clinches the argument by depressing the general capacity of the others. "In fact, without miscegenation the negro seems to have no future, a truth which but for false sentiment and theological prejudice would have long since been universally recognized."\* This does not mean that there ought to be miscegenation, but only that without it the negro's case is hopeless.

In closing, just a few words about the so-called "social question." In Columbia the segregation of the negroes is as complete as it can well be as long as they remain a part of the population. They serve their white neighbors in various humble capacities. In many instances, particularly where the negroes concerned

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\*Keane, *Ethnology*, p. 265.

belong to the "old regime," the intercourse thus necessitated is cordial to a marked degree. Among the whites the desire is general to be as helpful as possible to a helpless people. On the part of the negroes, however, especially the young, the attitude is usually one of distrust or latent animosity. Wherever the two groups touch, the white man commands, the black man obeys. Of inter-racial social life, in the narrow sense of the term, there is not the slightest trace. The "color line" is distinct. It is also ineradicable.

As a matter of fact the "social question" does not exist at all except in the perfervid imaginations of a few alarmists, or as the "shibboleth" of the political demagogue. Just as soon as the negro shall become inherently worthy of the rights, privileges and opportunities now so jealously reserved for himself by the white man he will enter into such rights, privileges and opportunities automatically.

In the meanwhile (and this is said in all kindness for the negroes) the blacks in this country ought to be treated, in theory, not in practice, just as we have dealt with the red men. They ought to be treated as "wards of the nation," and as such dealt with by a department of the National Government created for that purpose.

Surely, forty years after emancipation, it is not too much to hope that the partisan policies and fatuous mistakes of the Freedman's Bureau would not be repeated.

For the education of the children there should be a separate and distinct school system, carefully adapted to their peculiar needs, under the direction and control of skilled specialists. Nothing could be more idiotic than that provision of the Missouri Constitution, for example, which ordains that schools for negro children shall "be the same in conduct, management, control, advantages and privileges as for the white schools of corresponding grade." That is precisely what they should

not be. Aside from the debatable question whether the negroes are intellectually able to receive and use such an education, they do not need an education that would fit them for an ideal condition. They do need instruction that will open to them the practical opportunities of life in the South to-day.

For their police control there should be separate and distinct courts, just as we are now coming to have courts for offending juveniles, and probation officers for wayward children. Aside from their racial psychical and physical organization, the prolific cause of juvenile crime—the want of a wholesome home life—also lies back of much of the crime of which the negroes are guilty, and the offenders ought to be dealt with accordingly. Nothing can be more short-sightedly brutal than the ordinary treatment now meted out to negroes guilty of crime. Our attitude toward this feature of the problem ought not to be so entirely punitive, and more reformatory.

Politically they ought to be frankly disfranchised. They are “political idiots,” and it is sheer madness to permit them to misuse and prostitute a privilege which the Anglo-Saxons won for themselves only through a thousand years of painful history. This would, certainly, work an immediate hardship upon a worthy few, but in a complex race question such as this, the individual can have no rights. And vicarious suffering is ever the cost of progress everywhere. It may be very important that a few intelligent and worthy negroes should have the right to vote. It is more important that the mass of negroes should be put into the way of progress, and the fact that the negro votes is an insuperable bar to his progress in the South.

Religiously they ought to be under the guardian tutorship of the white churches. While we are sending well-educated, trained, and expensively equipped white

missionaries to die of fever among the savages of Africa we still find it consonant with duty to turn over the semi-savages at home to the guidance of ignorant, frequently self-conceited and often immoral negro "preachers." The comparatively few negro clergymen of education and character among them have little if any real influence for good. The mass of their constituents is out of sympathy with their works and hopes.

We have taken hold of this entire negro problem at the wrong end. It is high time to admit the error and begin aright.











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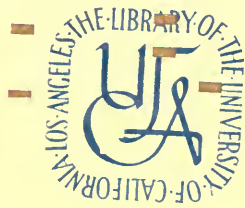
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